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REMARKS:

Applicant has carefully considered the Office Action mailed February 2, 2005. Reconsideration of the application in view of this amendment in response thereto is respectfully requested.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The last line of claim 10 and claim 11 were apparently inadvertently omitted when the application was filed. Claim 10 has been amended to include the omitted last line, and omitted claim 11 has been added as a new claim.

Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Howe et al in view of Dornier and Sullivan. The Howe et al reference discloses a boat attachment. The Howe et al reference however does not disclose a lock unit having an over-center clamping means as taught and claimed by the present application. The Dornier reference discloses a means for use in connection with flying machines to protect floats of the flying machine against damage when settling on the surface of water. The Dornier reference however does not disclose a lock unit having an over-center clamping means as taught and claimed by the present application. The Sullivan reference discloses a canoe stabilizing and guide mechanism. The Sullivan reference however does not disclose a lock unit having an over-center clamping means as taught and claimed by the present application.

There is nothing in the Howe et al, Dornier or Sullivan references, singly or in

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combination, that teaches, suggests, or provides any incentive to modify or combine those teachings such that it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of applicant's invention to provide a lock unit having an over-center clamping means as taught and claimed by the present application. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to more clearly distinguish the present invention from the Howe et al, Dornier and Sullivan references.

It is noted that claims 2-6, 8 and 9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 6 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1 and 7, from which claims 2-5 and 8-11 depend, have been amended to more clearly the invention as claimed from the cited references. As a result, claims 1-5 and 7-11 should now be in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if it is felt that the prosecution of this application may be expedited thereby.

Respectfully submitted,

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